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## SOME NOTES ON "THE MONOLITH INSCRIPTION OF SALMANESER II."

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Dr. Craig<sup>1</sup> has earned the gratitude of Assyriologists by furnishing them with a good text and an excellent translation of this highly important inscription. Thanks to the very careful study he has made of the original stone, he has succeeded in finding satisfactory readings for a considerable number of words hitherto regarded as illegible or obscure, and besides the numerous corrections he has to offer to the text as given in III Rawlinson, the conjectures which he proposes for the broken-off portions are valuable and in most cases entirely acceptable. Nor should mention of the commentary added by Dr. Craig be omitted, though one might have wished this part to have been more copious than it is.

The following miscellaneous notes, suggested by a study of Dr. Craig's work, may, perhaps, throw further light on some passages and otherwise be found of some value.

Col. I., 3. In view of the reading *tu-ku-um-tu* Col. II., 71, there seems to be no good reason why we should not read *tuḫunttu* here instead of *tuḫunttu*, as Dr. Craig proposes; all the more so as the reading with *n* is not found, as far as I am aware, in historical texts (at all events very rarely), but only in syllabaries. See Delitzsch to Lotz Tigl. Pil., p. 94.

Line 6. There are several examples of erasures in this inscription made by the scribe himself<sup>2</sup>, and I am therefore inclined to believe that the difficulty at the end of this line is to be explained on such grounds.

A comparison with I R. 36, 1, where we have *ni-šit ênâ A-num* "darling of Anu," suggests that in this instance, too, the scribe, forgetting that he had already written *e-ni*, wrote or started to write *šI* with dual sign and then erased it. The faint traces, still to be seen, fit in with this supposition, while not positively confirming it. Furthermore, it appears that, in consequence of this erasure, the scribe forgot—if Dr. Craig's copy may be trusted—to add the determinative before the god *Bêl*.

The expression *nišit* of this or that god, used quite synonymously with *narâm* "beloved" (e. g. Sar. I., 10) is best explained as a briefer form that arose from *nišit êni* or *nišit ênâ*.

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<sup>1</sup> HEBRAICA, vol. III., No. 4, pp. 201-232.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Col. I., 7, where the scribe after erroneously reduplicating *šI* erased the first.

35. Supply *biltu u* before *madâtu*. The measurement warrants this, and the parallel passages, such as I., 23, render it quite certain.

47. A comparison with lines 15 and 19 favors the addition of *ŠAB.ŠUN.-MEŠ.* = *ummanâtê*, after *narkabâtê*. The traces seem to be in accord. So also Col. II., 3, the reading *ummanâtê* is certainly to be preferred to *ma'adu*. Instead of *dikta-šu* supplied by Dr. Craig at the end of the line, I should prefer *tidukišunu*, as more in accord with the style of the inscription (cf. Col. I., 39 and II., 98). The readings in I, 24, II, 11 and 64 would then have to be similarly altered. The point appears to be a trifling one and yet it is well to preserve the uniformity of style in an inscription, where we are not warranted in assuming any variation.

II., 5-6. Read "*ma-ha-ze rabûte ša alu Pa-ti-na-a ak-te-rib. Alani ša tamdi e-li-ni-ti ša mat A-har-ri,*" etc. *The great towns of the Patinians I approached. The cities of the upper sea of Aharru. I destroyed.* For the expression *tamdu elinitu* instead of the more usual *tamdu elitu* see San. Tayl. I., 13 and III R. 12, 3. With this reading there is no longer any reason to doubt that DUP is here the ideogram for *erib*.

53, 54. It is not easy to say exactly how the text originally read, though the general sense of the passage is clear, but something like the following seems to be demanded by the context, and is, moreover, justified on other grounds:

After *ašip* supply ["*šihroute rabûltê ina lib-bi [batule šu]nu šal ba-tu-[la-te-šu-nu ana] a-si-ta-a-ti,*" etc. *The small and great within (sc. the city) their youths and maidens at the asitâta on stakes I impaled.* To see the justice of this restoration, it is necessary to compare Col. I., 17. Cf. also Ašurn. II. 19. The only change that my conjecture demands is the substitution of the fem. dem. for the signs *TE.AŠ*, which resemble *ŠAL*. sufficiently to warrant the belief that another inspection of the stone would show the latter to be the actual character. The rendering "columns" for *asitatu* does not appear satisfactory. The word has long been recognized as a difficult one.<sup>1</sup> It is clearly the equivalent of the Talmudic **אִשְׁתָּא**<sup>2</sup> which is of frequent occurrence, and is throughout used in the sense of "wall." In Arabic, on the other hand, under the form **أَسْبَعَة**, the meaning is apparently "column, pillar," but Fraenkel<sup>3</sup> very properly classes it among the loan-words from the Aramæan, so that the Arabic meaning in no case counts for much and we are thrown back to the Talmudic as coming nearer to the original sense. In the Mandaic dialect<sup>4</sup>, also, the word is found with the meaning "wall." That in Assyrian, similarly, it was something connected with a wall, is clearly shown by the passage in the Tiglath-pileser inscription, Col. 5, 27, where it occurs by the side of *dûru*: "*dura-šu raba-a u a-sa-ia-ti-šu ša agurri ana*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lotz T. P., p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> See the passages in Jastrow's *Talm. Diet.*, s. v.

<sup>3</sup> *Aramäische Fremdw.*, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Nöldeke *Mand. Gram.*, p. 113.

nabali akbâsi." From Ašurn. II., 89, it also follows that an asitu was something erected at the entrance to a city and therefore near the city wall. An asitu must have been rather broad—and for this reason a "column" seems out of the question—for Ašurnaširbal in the same passage speaks of having spread the skins of his captives over it. The addition of ša kākka dēšu in the two passages of our inscription, Col. I., 16, and II., 53, to the word, leaves scarcely a doubt of its being an architectural term and the last appeal, therefore, as in the case of all *termini technici* of Babylonian and Assyrian architecture must be made to archæology. Dr. Craig recognizes this in his note to the word and therefore his rendering "a column of heads" is all the more surprising. While we are, therefore, justified in referring both the Arabic, Talmudical and Mandaean equivalent back to the Assyrian as the original source—as will be found to be the case with other architectural terms, etc.—the special meanings which the term may have acquired in traveling from one people to another can at best serve as a guide, but not as a positive indication of what the term was applied to in Assyrian. It may be said with safety that an asitu was a structure built at the city wall—perhaps a frame-work—and that asitu ša kakkadešu is a place where executions took place. The two forms for the plural asitu (or a-sa-ia-tu) and asitatu are rather curious, and it is interesting to note that the former of these corresponds letter for letter with the plural in the Mandaean **אשיאתא**. In a future article I shall discuss this word and the expression asitu ša kākka dēšu at greater length.

60. In an article published in Bezold's Zeitschrift (vol. II., p. 353 seq.), I have shown that epšitu here and in some other passages is to be translated "story," "narrative," and forms a parallel to Hebrew **מעשה** which in post-biblical literature is used in precisely the same way.

72. Instead of rupuš read gibiš, as in I., 32 and in II., 15, where we have gi-biš ummanatešu. That the sign here used has among others this value, is proved by II R. 26, No. 1, col. 10 c. d., where after gab we must evidently supply šu.<sup>1</sup>

75. Is KI-LAL, perhaps, to be read šukultu, according to V R. 41, No. 2, 58?<sup>2</sup> For another meaning of this compound ideogram see V R. 16, Rev. 44. I close with a list of some interesting parallel passages in this inscription :

Col. I., 19 = II., 42.

Col. I., 21 = II., 21 and 32.

Col. II., 7 = II., 39.

Col. I., 27 = I., 49 = II., 44.

Col. I., 46 = II., 50.

Col. II., 44 = II., 54.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zimmermann, BP., p. 76; Brünnow's List, No. 5450.

<sup>2</sup> See also II R. 8, 11e,f (Strassmaier, AV. 8136); Brünnow's List, No. 9817.